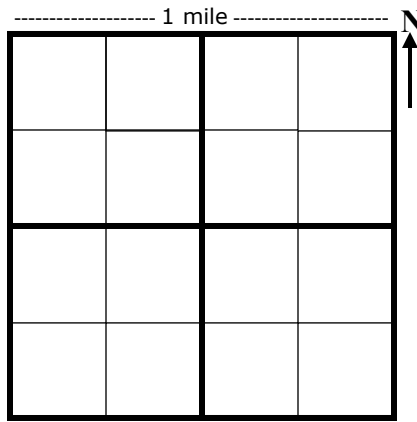
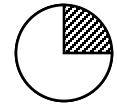


Upper Elkhorn NRD Criteria Rating for Adding New Groundwater Irrigated Acres – 2021 Growing Season

Form No. _____	I.D. #. _____ (for office use)
Date Received: _____ (for office use)	



Draw the corresponding quarter and denote the location of new acre expansion with hash marks. Example Below:



Applicant: _____
 (Must be landowner or Power of Attorney)
 Address: _____
 City, State, Zip: _____
 Phone Number: _____
 Cell Phone: _____

Expansion of Acres (Flowmeter Required) for an:
 Existing Well Registration #: _____
 New Well

Flowmeter Placed on: New Pivot Source Pivot

Location of acre expansion map
 _____ ¼ _____ ¼ _____ Sec _____ Tshp _____ Rge

New Acre Expansion Description:
 _____ Corner(s) New
 Extending Pivot Partial Pie
 Historical Completing Pie

Criteria and Point Rating (All points are associated with legal on application)

	Scoring	For Office Use Only
1. Section Stream Depletion Factor _____ (see map): a. ≤ 40.0% stream depletion b. 40.01% - 50.0% stream depletion c. 50.01% - 60.0% stream depletion d. 60.01% - 70.0% stream depletion e. 70.01 % - 80.0% stream depletion f. 80.01% - 90.0% stream depletion g. ≥ 90.01 stream depletion	+40 +35 +20 +15 +10 +5 +0	
2. Ground Water Nitrate Area Contamination (see township map): a. Nitrates in the township ≤ 5.0 ppm b. Nitrates in the township 5.01 – 9.0 ppm c. Nitrates in the township 9.01 – 15.0 ppm d. Nitrates in the township ≥ 15.01 ppm	+20 +10 +5 +0	
3. Static Water Level (SWL)/Depth to Ground Water for the Sub-district (Basin) (see map): a. 20 year Trendline for Subdistrict is increasing b. 20 year Trendline for Subdistrict is level or declining 0 - 12” c. 20 year Trendline for Subdistrict is declining > 12”	+20 +5 +0	
4. Irrigation Plan: Irrigation method (Flowmeter required, see Guidelines below): a. Drip Irrigation b. Pivot/Sprinklers c. Flood, Gated, or Other	+10 +5 +0	
5. Irrigation Plan: New Acres to be Irrigated _____ (best estimate): Certification of new acres required, see Guidelines below. a. New acres total ≤ 15 acres to complete an irrigation distribution system (finish center pivot) b. New acres total ≤ 15 acres which do not complete an irrigation distribution system (finish center pivot) c. New acres total > 15 acres	+40 +5 +0	
6. Do you make the fertilizer decision, purchase fertilizer, or apply more than 50 pounds of nitrogen fertilizer per acre within the Upper Elkhorn NRD? If so any are true, are you... (If you are out of compliance these acres are automatically disqualified .) a. Certified in Nitrogen Management by NRD – in compliance b. Not Certified in Nitrogen Management by NRD – out of compliance c. Not required to be certified in Nitrogen Management	Y / N +0 DQ +0	
7. Phase II Management Area: If you own or operate acres within the Phase II management area you are required to fill out Phase II reports annually. If you have not submitted Phase II reports these acres are automatically disqualified . a. Acres fall outside Phase II area – not required to report b. Acres fall within Phase II area, reports filled – in compliance c. Acres fall within Phase II area, reports not filled – out of compliance	+0 +0 DQ	
Total Points Page 1:		

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	Scoring	For Office Use Only
8. Acre certification (If your acres within UENRD are not certified these acres are automatically disqualified .) a. Your acres are not irrigated and therefore not required to be certified b. Your irrigated acres are certified with UENRD – in compliance c. Your irrigated acres are not certified with UENRD – out of compliance	+0 +0 DQ	
9. Web Soil Survey Classification Points – Irrigation capability class will be determined on an area weighted average of each land classification by utilizing the USDA-NRCS Web Soil Survey Program. a. Land Classification 1 _____ % X +30 pts = _____ b. Land Classification 2 _____ % X +25 pts = _____ c. Land Classification 3 _____ % X +20 pts = _____ d. Land Classification 4 _____ % X +15 pts = _____ e. Land Classification 5 _____ % X +10 pts = _____ Sub Total f. Land Classification 6-8 _____ % X + 0 pts = _____		
10. Stream drainage data as determined by USDA-NRCS Web Soil Survey Program a. Stream drainage b. >1 Stream drainage c. No stream drainage	-5 -10 +0	
11. Sodbusting and crop history: a. These acres were tilled in the 2020 growing season and/or produced a crop, therefore irrigated development is not sodbusting b. These acres were not tilled in the 2020 growing season nor produced a crop, and therefore will be sodbusting c. These acres will be completing a pivot ≤ 15 acres (Number 5a) and are therefore exempt	+0 -10 +0	
12. Bazile Groundwater Management Area (see District or Bazile map) a. Falls outside BWMA b. Falls within BWMA	+10 +0	
13. East Branch Verdigre Creek (see Hydrologic Unit map): (LISTED AS SOUTH BRANCH) a. Falls outside South Branch Verdigre Creek Hydrologic Unit b. Falls inside South Branch Verdigre Creek Hydrologic Unit	+10 +0	
14. Willow Creek Watershed (see Hydrologic Unit map) a. Falls outside Willow Creek Hydrologic Unit b. Falls within Willow Creek Hydrologic Unit	+10 +0	
15. Niobrara/Missouri River (see 10/50 map) If the proposed acres fall within the 10/50 area AND that basin is labelled “Fully Appropriated,” the acres will be automatically disqualified from this acre expansion. See 15 in the Guidelines below for more information. a. Falls outside of Niobrara/Missouri River 10/50 area b. Falls within the Niobrara/Missouri River 10/50 area	+10 +0	
16. Proximity to other High Capacity Wells: a. Well is outside of 1,300 feet of another owner’s high capacity well b. Well is within 1,300 feet of another owner’s high capacity well	+10 +0	
17. Is the well that will be used to irrigate these acres a new well (entirely or helper) or old well? a. Old well b. New well	+10 +0	
Total Points Page 2:		

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18. Conservation Practices proposed/existing for the developed acres (max. 10 points) a. New and/or Existing CCRP, SAFE, Corners for Wildlife, NSWCP contract or similar program being used on application site (Documentation must be provided by applicant, see Guidelines below) List Practices: _____ b. Removal of conservation management programs c. No addition or removal of conservation practices	+2.5/ Contract -10 +0	
19. Best management practices existing for the developed/adjoining acres (max. 10 points). Please see 19 in the Ranking Criteria Guidelines below; additional signature required. a. New and/or Existing use of soil moisture probe, cover crops, nitrogen inhibitors on application site. (Contract or receipt documentation must be provided by applicant) List BMPs: _____ b. No addition or removal of best management practices	+2.5/ Contract +0	
<i>Total Points Page 3:</i>		
<i>Total Points Page 2:</i>		
<i>Total Points Page 1:</i>		
<i>Total Points (Total Page 1 + Total Page 2 + Total Page 3)</i>		

Non-Refundable Application Fee must be submitted with application:

Less than 25 acres = \$125

Greater than 25 Acres (Acres _____ X \$5 per acre = \$ _____)

The addition of irrigated acres will be rated by the following criteria, which is an overall assessment of the conditions on the proposed site for development. Following a review by NRD staff and the Board of Directors, points will be assigned and the highest ranked applications will be approved for the expansion of irrigated acres as long as it meets all District and State rules and regulations. Application time period runs during the month of October 2020. An application fee of \$5/acre with a minimum application of \$125 is required in order to be considered for the expansion of irrigated acres. Applicants will be notified of their application status within 60 days after the application deadline. Upon approval of this application the expansion of all irrigated acres will have until October 1, 2021 to be completed.

Criteria Ranking Guidelines:

1. Stream depletion factor is based off of the Elkhorn-Loup and CENEB Modeling studies which gives numerical impacts of each section within the UENRD to the Elkhorn River based on proximity and hydroconnectivity. Normally, the farther a section is from the stream and less connected it is, the less the impact.
2. Ground Water Nitrate Area Contamination will be assessed based on area contaminates of Nitrates determined by the NRD sampling conducted annually during the irrigation season. Those areas which have high contaminates will be penalized if the 2019 average nitrates in that area are over 10 ppm (see nitrate township map).
3. Static Water Level (SWL)/Depth to Ground Water review will be conducted by NRD personnel to determine the overall characteristics of the ground water levels in the area. Area static water levels will be assessed to determine if there is a decline, of spring static water levels, over 20 years with spring of 2020 being the most recent measurement year. Shallow depths to ground water are more susceptible to flooding and contamination and will be determined by comparing area wells.
4. **Installation of a flowmeter will be required on all new expansion of irrigated acres, and will be inspected by a UENRD staff member.** If using an existing well, the flowmeter must be installed by May 18, 2021. If using a new well, the flowmeter must be installed by October 1, 2021.
5. Irrigation Plan will list the best estimate of the new acres to be irrigated. This 2021 Growing Season Acre Expansion is focusing on completing irrigation distribution systems (finishing center pivots/completing a “pie.”) Emphasis is placed on parcels less than or equal to 15 acres, and which are finishing a full circle, 360° center pivot irrigation system, therefore increasing efficiency of the system by allowing for continuous rotation. Using acres to partially complete or fill a “pie” does not qualify as finishing a pivot.
 - a. **Once the expansion is completed the landowner will have until May 18, 2022 to certify with UENRD the actual expanded irrigated acres, not to exceed estimated acres.**
6. Landowners will also be rated as to whether or not they are certified by the NRD in Nitrogen Management.
7. Landowners will also be rated as to whether or not they are meeting the Phase II reporting requirements.
8. Upon the Nebraska DNR labeling the District as fully-appropriated where the development is to occur, the landowner may be required to offset those acres if acres have not been irrigated by that designation date.

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9. The USDA-NRCS Web Soil Survey program will be used to determine the irrigation capability class and the stream/drainage.
10. See Number 9
11. Sodbusting will be considered developing land that was not tilled in the 2020 growing season nor produced a crop in the 2020 growing season. If it was tilled and produced a crop (i.e., dryland farming, including alfalfa), it will not be considered sodbusting. Seeing as the emphasis of the 2021 Growing Season Acre Expansion is finishing full circle, center pivots, those applicants who are finishing pivots with less than or equal to 15 acres (receiving 40 points for question 5a) are exempt.
12. Within the Bazile Groundwater Management Area? See Map
13. Within the East Branch Verdigre Creek Hydrologic Unit? See Map
14. Within the Willow Creek Watershed Hydrologic Unit? See Map
15. Up to 1,000 acres will be allotted in 2021 growing season throughout the entire Upper Elkhorn NRD as long as they have not been determined “fully appropriated” by the Department of Natural Resources and meet the minimum required score on this application.
 - a. If the new irrigated acres fall within the 10/50 line of a river basin (i.e. the Niobrara River Basin) and that basin is labelled “fully appropriated,” they will be automatically disqualified even if they meet the minimum score requirement. The “fully appropriated” designation will not be made until after the deadline for acre expansion application; any applications with acres in this area apply with the risk of being disqualified after the fact.
16. Proximity to other high capacity wells will be determined based off of the well registration database. This is done to reduce impact on neighboring wells and relieve stress during the high pumping seasons.
17. The new acres are rated as to whether they will be irrigated completely by an old/existing well, or whether an entirely new or helper well will be installed to irrigate the new acres.
18. Conservation practices under contract on the property applying for a new application permit will receive award points. Conservation practices may include, but are not limited to; Continuous CRP, NSWCP, SAFE program, EQIP, and Corners for Wildlife. Landowners may also receive additional points if they agree to plant a minimum of 150 trees associated with a conservation contract on the site which they would like to develop; and, if they plant additional trees anywhere on their property. Conservation practices may be inspected by a UENRD staff member for compliance by October 1, 2021.
19. Best management practices on the property will be awarded points. Proof of practices must be provided through contracts with EQIP, contracts with independent crop consultants, or receipts with proof of use of BMP on parcel. BMPs may include, but are not limited to; use of cover crops, nitrogen inhibitors, grass waterways, no-till, and soil moisture probes. BMPs will be inspected by a UENRD staff member for compliance by October 1, 2021. For a full list and descriptions of approved practices please see “Approved BMPs for 2020 Acre Expansion”. **Applicants must sign the BMPs form to earn points associated with this question.**
 - a. Using BMPs to gain qualifying points requires the submission of an annual report for 5 years after the acres are developed. Failure to submit reports will result in the forfeiture of expanded acres approved under this contract.
20. A minimum score of 140 is required to qualify for this acre expansion.
21. Applications and Approval are non-transferable.

I certify to the best of my knowledge that all information submitted on this form is accurate and truthful; and, that I have read the full application. Falsification of information will cause the application to be revoked.

Signature of Landowner or Power of Attorney: _____ Date: _____

Signature of NRD Employee Compiling Rating: _____ Date: _____